

Yamagata Aritomo

"The time of samurai is over... But the spirit of the warriors will forever remain in us."

"...We must select able people, send them abroad in order to become intimately acquainted with world conditions and to acquire practical knowledge about warships, artillery, military systems and administration."



Background Information

Early Life:

- Born on June 14, 1838, to a samurai family
- educated with classical Chinese and Japanese literature by his father.
- learned many forms of martial arts: fence, fighting with spears, and self defense with jujitsu.

Early Career:

- participated in the loyalist movement that contributed in the fall of Tokugawa shogunate.
- proposed the increase in army and navy size.
- encouraged young people to visit foreign nations in order "to become intimately acquainted with world conditions and to acquire practical knowledge about warships, artillery, military systems and administration."
- visited England, France, Belgium, Holland, Prussia, Russia, and the US himself.
- Admired Prussian military and set it as his role model.
- afterward, he began to reform and organize a modern army for Japan.

Late Career:

- participated in politics
- worked as home minister (1883-1889)
- went abroad for the second time to learn about politics and government.
- Prime minister (1889-1890, 1898-1900)